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September 22, 2015

Behaviour Based Programs

Unifor does not support our member's participation in Behaviour Based Safety (BBS) programs such as "Safe Start" or "Dupont Safety Stop" training.

These programs are developed to blame the worker by focusing on worker behaviour rather than focusing on the inefficiencies or failures within the workplace accident prevention system. It is cleverly designed to shift the burden of responsibility away from management despite the legal responsibility under provincial and federal occupational health and safety acts which state that the employer must "take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker" – known as the "General Duty" clause.

Instead, if there is an accident, it is assumed that it was human error and therefore worker blame or discipline is the corrective action. This approach will never identify the root cause of an accident or the corrective actions that could prevent a reoccurrence of the incident or accident.

The examples are clear in the Safe Start documents, statements such as; "One's own actions contribute to the vast majority of all incidents/injuries" and "Injuries are very rare due to something unexpected happening without human involvement." Clearly, you can see from these examples that the blame is being placed squarely on the individual.

The other concerning issue of Behaviour Based Safety programs, is the "reward approach" to safety. Workers are promised pizza parties, BBQ lunch or jackets, etc. for safe behaviour. This pressures workers to suppress raising health and safety concerns and develops a culture of peer pressure to NOT report incidents or injury. Our concern is that if it's not reported, it can't be identified, if it can't be identified, it can't be corrected.

What Does Unifor Support?

Unifor supports responsible, progressive action through the workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee to address accidents and exposures and recommend practical prevention solutions such as Job Safety Analysis and comprehensive on-the-job training.

We support the 3R's – the Right to Know, the Right to Participate, the Right to Refuse and we demand a 4th R – the Right to no Reprisal for participating in workplace health and safety actions.

Unifor is committed to advocating for the elimination and/or control of hazardous workplace conditions; both physical and chemical, in our quest for worker health and safety protection.